

Our 111th year of serving the Carbondale area -- home of Thomas Gill

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Special ceremony held in Maplewood Cemetery to mark Fourth of July

"I don't care if I'm the only one there. I want to do this." S. Robert Powell was talking about the Fourth of July Ceremony which subsequently took place in the Maplewood Cemetery on Independence Day. Powell felt that there was no better way to reflect on our nation's past than to gather where most of Carbondale's pioneers are now buried. Accordingly, he orchestrated a memorial ceremony which focused on the contributions made by Carbondale area people in years past.

The ceremony which began at 11:00 a.m. was sponsored by the Maplewood Cemetery Association, of which Powell is president.

The program opened with the Pledge of Allegiance, which was followed by welcoming remarks by Powell. Thereafter, two recorded performances of "The Star Spangled Banner" were played with a hi fidelity sound system powered by a portable generator.

Powell then delivered a brief history of the cemetery and presented a biographical portrait of Alexander Bryden (1799-1854), one of the many pioneer settlers of Carbondale who is interred in Maplewood Cemetery. A recorded performance of the Agnus Dei from the Faure "Requiem," as performed by the chorus and orchestra of the Church of St. Eustache in Paris, was then played in memory of Alexander Bryden, the more than 7,000 persons who are interred in Maplewood Cemetery, and all deceased citizens of

Carbondale.

To honor, in particular, all those men and women who have participated in all the wars in which this country has participated, the Civil War soldiers of Carbondale were singled out to be honored in this year's Maplewood ceremonies. Those soldiers were honored by the playing of two recorded performances of the famous Civil War song "When Johnny Comes Marching Home."

Following those two performances, Powell gave a brief account of the Battle of Gettysburg, and recited Lincoln's Gettysburg Address. Thereafter, John V. Buberniak, representing the Carbondale Historical Society, read the names of the Civil War soldiers from Carbondale who are buried in Maplewood Cemetery, in the old and the new Catholic Cemeteries in Carbondale, and in cemeteries outside of Carbondale.

Jeff Kelsch then played Taps in memory of all those men and women who have participated in all the wars in which this country has participated.

Rev. Dr. Claude A. Pullis of the Berean Baptist Church then offered a prayer for the Fourth of July.

The ceremonies concluded with a recorded performance of John Philip Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

The Maplewood Cemetery Association intends to make the Fourth of July Ceremony an annual event.



FOURTH OF JULY TRIBUTE -- Approximately 35 people gathered for a unique Independence Day ceremony in Carbondale's Maplewood Cemetery.

Two versions of the "Star Spangled Banner" were played as those in attendance stood at attention or bowed their heads in meditation. (NEWS Photo)